



Report to the Auburn City Council

Action Item	11
Agenda Item No.	
City Manager's Approval	

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
From: Rich Owens, Chairman, Technology Commission
Andy Heath, Administrative Services Director
Date: February 27, 2012
Subject: Communication Telephone / Voicemail System Request for Proposals

The Issue

Shall the City Council approve a motion directing staff and the Technology Commission to issue and facilitate a Request for Proposals as it relates to the replacement of the City's telephone and voicemail system?

Conclusions and Recommendations

By MOTION, direct staff and the Technology Commission to issue and facilitate a Request for Proposals (RFP) as it relates to the replacement of the City's telephone and voicemail system.

Background

The efficient and effective delivery of services citywide is heavily dependent on an effective and efficient telephone / voicemail technology solution (telephone system). Although the City has used the existing telephone system, the "Toshiba Strategy" for approximately seventeen (17) years, the inherent technology has become significantly outdated and to some extent, unsupported. Furthermore, the existing telephone system is limited in terms of its ability to accommodate new users and storage capacity.

Taking advantage of advances in telephony technology over the past ten years is not possible without considering implementation of a new system. Implementation of a new phone system will enable the City to better integrate networked systems and effortlessly store necessary data. Additionally, upgrading the telephone system provides needed scalability - allowing for the seamless addition and deletion of system users without having to pay an exorbitant amount finding resources to assist with the existing unsupported system.

Analysis

As a means to develop the framework for developing a telephone / voicemail system RFP, staff has been working with members of the City's Technology Commission (the "Team"). Issuance and the subsequent review of an RFP will enable the Team to determine how the City may best be able to:

- Take advantage of technological enhancements as they relate to telephony – i.e. Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) and voicemail and call identification/forwarding features;
- Increase the reliability and performance of the telephone / voicemail system;
- Better serve the community through increased access to City resources using telephone / voicemail technology;
- Provide a scalable telephone / voicemail solution able to meet future growth and seamless updates/upgrades to new system.

The RFP being considered has taken into account a considerable amount of preliminary research conducted by the Team. All City departments were interviewed to determine what their specific needs and goals were consistent with the implementation of a new system. Additionally, the Team surveyed the types of phone systems used by eight cities and two counties in an effort to determine how their experiences and challenges may impact the City of Auburn's RFP and implementation process. The information obtained from these interviews and surveys enabled the Team to compile a list of interested vendors, which currently stands at six different capable companies.

The final version of the RFP being considered will have a defined timeline and evaluation process:

Step in Process	Estimated Date
1. Issue RFP	Mid-March, 2012
2. RFP responses due	End of April, 2012
3. Selected vendor demonstrations (based on outcome of initial RFP evaluation)	Mid-May, 2012
4. Final evaluation of RFP consistent with demonstration conducted by vendors	End of May, 2012
5. Negotiate terms with selected vendor	June, 2012
6. Implementation of new system	July, 2012

RFP Evaluation Process

Once all RFP's are received, a team of City employees (core users) and Technology Commission members will review and evaluate all responses for completeness and select any number of vendors to conduct a demonstration of the proposed system. Factors considered in the overall evaluation of the system, both as presented in written response to the RFP and the demonstration, include:

Analysis, cont.

- Functionality of standard equipment
- Availability of additional capabilities
- Scalability of system
- System security
- User-friendliness of system
- System administration
- System quality, reliability, and warranty
- Vendor's commitment to system
- System cost
- Vendor's industry qualifications

Alternatives Available to Council; Implications of Alternatives

1. Approve a motion directing staff and the Technology Committee to issue and facilitate a Request for Proposals (RFP) as it relates to the replacement of the City's telephone and voicemail system.
2. Do not approve a motion to issue and facilitate an RFP. Continued use of the existing telephone / voicemail system increasingly compromises the City's ability to provide consistent levels of customer service as it relates to communications and data storage.

Fiscal Impact

None at this time. The full array of cost alternatives (outright purchase or leasing of a new system along with required maintenance and support) will be considered with development of the operating budget for Fiscal Year 2012-13.

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